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## Libby Asbestos - Stimson Mill

Libby, MT - EPA Region VIII  
POLREP #10 - Initiation of Action

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SDMS Document ID



2031507

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
RECORD**

On-Scene Coordinator - Craig Myers

Time-Critical - Removal Action

Start Date: 5/2/2005

Pollution Report (POLR)



### Site Description

The Libby Asbestos Site includes an inactive vermiculite mine located in northwestern Montana. Vermiculite mining at Zonolite Mountain (the site was commenced by the Universal Zonolite Company in the 1920s. In 1969, W.R. Grace acquired the property and continued operations until September 1990.

The processed ore was trucked down the Rainy Creek Road to a Screening Plant, which separated the milled ore into several sizes. Subsequently, the screened ore was moved by conveyor belt across the Kootenai River and shipped either to the Export/Expansion Plant in Libby for further processing or across the country by rail.

This POLREP details only a portion of OU 05 - the "Former Stimson Central Maintenance Building" (CMB). The Stimson property housed vermiculite processing operations until 1950. After that, the Stimson Lumber Mill began producing plywood and dimensioned lumber, continuing to do so until 2002. Buildings around the property contain varying amounts of vermiculite. The property is now owned and operated by the Lincoln County Port Authority, a non-profit portion of the county government that was established to coordinate and oversee economic redevelopment in Libby.

### Current Activities

#### Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection Results

Within the CMB, three distinct areas have been identified that have Vermiculite Containing Insulation (VCI) and asbestos containing building materials that are causing a human health threat or threatening a release to the environment. These areas are the Midline Wall (believed to have once been an exterior wall), the former Mobile Shop, and the former Mobile Shop roof. VCI has been observed leaking from all sections of the Midline Wall and the walls of the Former Mobile Shop. The Former Mobile Shop roof was constructed of a tongue and groove deck material and covered with a light concrete type material. EPA believes that vermiculite was mixed in with this concrete as aggregate. The concrete was sampled and tested out at less than 1% Libby Amphibole. However, the concrete material is damaged to the point that it cannot be repaired. Future removal or repair, due to the structural damage rather than contamination, will threaten the remedy planned for the interior of the mobile shop.

Portions of the lower roof areas are of similar construction as the former Mobile Shop roof, but are undamaged. Future removal or repair will not pose a threat to the remedy inside the building.

#### Current Response Actions

Currently, EPA is removing VCI from former exterior walls of the Central Maintenance Building. We are currently only working on the Midline Wall in the former Engineering and Warehouse (E & W) spaces. The decision to remove the insulation was made because portions of the building are presently occupied and VCI is leaking from the

into both occupied spaces in the building as well as onto the ground outside. Additional spaces in the building going to be leased out soon, and may be utilizing the overhead gantry cranes. EPA believes will cause more leak from the walls. EPA is also concerned that the industrial nature of the property will lead to higher than normal breaches of the wall cavities by utility workers, causing small releases each time. Due to the building's structural architecture, and proposed future use, there is no effective way to contain the VCI in the walls.

### **Planned Removal Actions**

Similar actions will take place in the Former Mobile Shop area, and the Former Mobile Shop roof will be removed and replaced with a suitable roofing material. Minor structural repairs may be necessary once removal of the concrete material is complete. These repairs will be done by the Lincoln County Port Authority.

### **Key Issues**

Coordination of building repairs with removal activities to ensure timely completion.

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